(d) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) There is no direct policy formulated by the Government of India to rehabilitate workers rendered unemployed due to closure of textile units. However, the Government of India launched a Textile Workers Rehabilitation Fund Scheme on 15.09.1986 to provide interim relief to textile workers rendered unemployed as a consequence of permanent closure of any particular portion or entire textile unit. Assistance under the Scheme is payable to eligible workers only for the purpose of enabling them to settle in another employment. Any worker is eligible provided he/she is engaged in a closed textile unit on the date of its closure continuously for five years or more and earning a wage equivalent of Rs. 2500 per month or less for the mills closed between 6.6.1985 to 1.4.1993 and Rs. 3500 or less thereafter. They should be contributing to the Provident Fund maintained by the Regional Provident Fund Commissioner of the State concerned.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of above.

Import of cotton and readymade garments from African countries

†3997. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that country's textile industry is likely to get relief on import of cotton and readymade garments, based on zero import duty, from African countries;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the value of import of cotton and readymade garments from these countries in past years 2004-05 and 2005-06, with value of export to these countries in the above years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) On the occasion of the First Indo-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi on 8th April, 2008-Prime Minister announced a Duty Free Tariff Preference Sheme for Least Developed Countries (LDCs). India will unilaterally provide preferential market access to exports from all the 50 least developed countries, 34 of which are in Africa. The scheme will cover 94% of India's total tariff lines. Specifically, it will provide preferential market access on tariff lines that comprise 95.5% of global exports of all Least Developed Countries. Presently under the Global system of Trade Preference, India offers import duty concessions on cotton yarn and Abaca Fibre (30% and 10% concession on normal duty respectively) to 51 LDC's/developing countries. The relief derived by the textile industry on account of the above will be known after the measures are formalised.

(c) (i) The value of import of Raw Cotton from African countries was US$ 87.96 million in 2004-05 and US$ 11.22 million in 2005-06.

(ii) The value of import of Readymade Garments was US$ 0.36 million in 2004-05 and US$ 0.24 million in 2005-06.

(iii) The value of Indian textiles exports to African countries was US$ 623.71 million in 2004-05 and US$ 583.15 million in 2005-06.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.